



**Testimony of
Sharon M. Palmer, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 3, 2015**

Good Day Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang and Representative Rutigliano and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **House Bill No. 1038 AA Allowing Fourteen-year-olds to be Employed as Referees, Umpires and Officials of Youth Athletic Programs**. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

I am unable to support this bill. This proposed bill enables fourteen-year-olds and older to be employed as referees, umpires or officials of youth athletic programs. However, there are no protections for the youth in the proposed bill.

Another state passed a similar law that had certain protections for the youth. For example:

- The minor must be certified through a national certification program.
- The minor may only officiate games for age brackets younger than the minor's age.
- The minor must work with someone who is at least 18 years of age and who is working at the same athletic event.
- Parental permission must be on file with the person responsible for assigning the child to officiate.

I would be willing to have further discussions with the proponents of this bill concerning safeguards for the minors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.